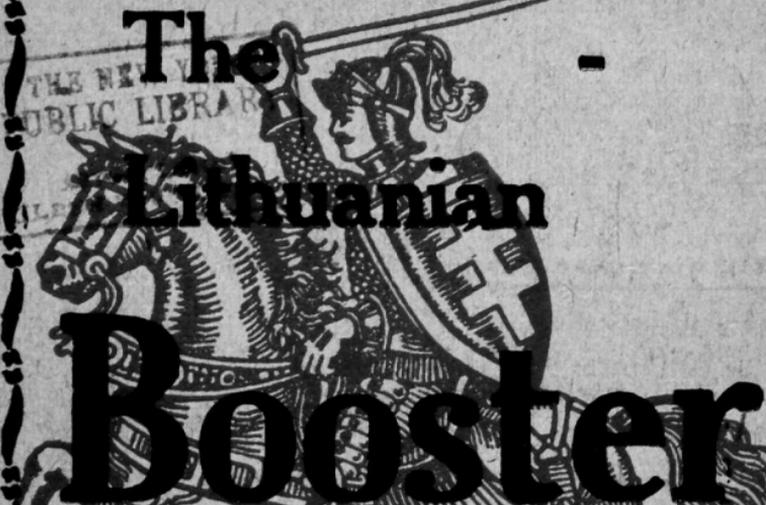


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**The**  
Lithuanian  
**Booster**



**THOMAS SHAMIS, Editor**

**Five Cents the Copy**

**July, 1918**

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# THE LITHUANIAN BOOSTER

ABOUT LITHUANIA AND LITHUANIANS

Thomas Shamis, Editor

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## JUSTICE

**L**ITHUANIANS: in creating societies, in publishing a great number of newspapers and books, gains every day upon the lost in letters and works to occupy, among the nations of humanity, the place to which their past entitles them.

## LITHUANIAN PROBLEM

**S**INCE the beginning of the world war, small nationalities are held in greater esteem by the civilized world. With the fourth year of the world war, the whole world speaks of peace and the problem which ought to result from that war. The problem of first rank is the right of small nations to govern themselves. Next to the problem of Poland and Ukraina comes that of Lithuania.

The Lithuanians charge themselves with giving the necessary information on Lithuania, but the Poles by misadventure or by reason accuse even themselves, and fear lest they should show to the civilized world, Lithuania poor, small, feeble, etc. a Lithuania which cannot find hope without Poland.

I am going to give some information upon the Lithuanian problem.

Lithuania as a grand-duchy was composed of ethnographical Lithuania (the governments of Vilna,

Kovno, Suwalki, and Grodno) as well as that of the Ukraina and White Russia. But nevertheless Ukraina and White Russia announced their independence and the Lithuanians did not reclaim even the right of reconstructing the Lithuanian grand-duchy as formerly but solely the independence of the entire ethnographical state.

The Lithuanians already had expressed this desire in 1905 during the first Russian revolution at the diet of Vilna, on the 18th of September, 1917. At the Lithuanian diet of Vilna and on May 28, 1917, the Russian Lithuanians re-united at Petrograd proclaimed the independence of Lithuania. Finally the Lithuanians of America in conventions at Chicago on the 21st and 22nd of September, 1914, and at New York on the 13th and 14th of March, 1918, asserted the same right to independence.

Everywhere the Lithuanians announced the same right: The independence of Lithuania.

Ethnographical Lithuania consists not only of the

government of Kovno and some other governmental districts, with the population of 2,000,000 of which 1,650,000 are Lithuanians, but also the governments of Vilna, Kovno, Suvalki and certain parts of the governments of Grodno, Courland, and of Vitebsk.

The population in the four governments of Vilna, Kovno, Suvalki and Grodno consists, according to the official Russian statistics of 1897 of 5,364,160 inhabitants of which 2,548,825 are Lithuanian. Before the war of 1914, it was computed in Russian Lithuania 3,000,000 Lithuanians, Prussian Lithuania 300,000; in Russia 350,000, in America and throughout the United States 750,000, and in England 30,000, of which the grand total of Lithuanians speaking Lithuanian in the world is 4,430,000.

Accordingly Lithuania is not so small. But I am going to remark that the Lithuanian government of Vilna and Grodno which formerly did not speak the pure Lithuanian language always considered themselves Lithuanians. Generally they called them-

selves Polish of which the Lithuanians speak a language mixed with Lithuanian, White Russian and Polish words.

There is not in Lithuania any true Poles because the Lithuanian statute does not grant to the Poles the right of acquiring anything in Lithuania and after the Lithuanian-Polish revolution of 1863, the Russian Government issued an edict to the Poles to acquire lands in Lithuania. According to the Polish statistician Balinski, there was in Vilna in 1837, Lithuanians Russians, Germans, Jews, but the Poles are not even mentioned. According to the same author again, the whole land spoke Lithuanian in the neighborhood of Vilna. M. Kreva who has published the result of his researches between 1857 and 1861 has discovered in the province of Vilna 386,860 Lithuanians constituting forty-six percent and 103,440 Polish constituting twelve percent. It cannot be comprehended thru such circumstances that Polish numbers accrued so rapidly in Lithuania, that cannot be explained except

thru the corruption of the Lithuanian elements and the White Russians who destroyed the conscience of their nationality. There are three different causes for this:

1. The economic cause. Since the union of Lublin in 1569, sixty-six percent of the great proprietors of the province of Vilna were Lithuanian-Polish who obliged to give themselves as Poles.

2. The second cause. That which gave to Vilna the entire appearance of being a Polish city was the prevention of publication in Lithuanian in Latin characters and including the forty years (1864-1904). This was equivalent to the complete suppression of the press for the Lithuanians used only Latin characters, and did not wish to adopt Slavonic characters.

3. The third cause. That the bishops of Vilna selected were always Poles. They naturally held their own high protection and the Polish clergy. This last has always been drawn to the defense of faith against the Lithuanians of having books in their lan-

guage. The Polish priests who since the introduction of Catholicity in Lithuania doubled their efforts to Polonize the Lithuanian peasants and farmers; they preached in the Polish language. Their books, their sermons, their liturgical songs were in Polish.

The problem of a free union or the future independence of Lithuania with Poland. It appears to me that this problem is without foundation because the Lithuanians will not draw any profit, and that they are well reminded since the first personal union with Poland in 1385 and even to the partitions of Lithuania between Russia and Prussia and that of Poland between Russia, Germany and Austria in 1795.

During ten years from 1904 to 1914, when the Lithuanians had received from the Russian government permission to print their books and papers in Latin characters and since the grand Lithuanian movement has begun that the bulk of Lithuanians have been chagrined against Polonization in the government of Vilna. This politic has been condemned not only

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by the Lithuanians but by the Polish democrats themselves because the Lithuanians desire one time for all measure, one limit to Polish politics, and to be peaceful. If Lithuania were united by force to Poland, there would be a continuous attempt to secure absolute independence. I believe that the Poles desire access to the Baltic Sea in Lithuania, but this may be an unjustifiable assumption. The Lithuanians have all the requisites for absolute independence. The institution of a National Lithuanian Council at Vilna proves it. The bruit court which the French and English governments have promised to the Polish to re-constitute Poland with Lithuania and Volynia, but I do believe that this will be contrary to the right of small nations and opposed to the purpose of the world war.

The Lithuanian problem does not import much difficulty. The absolute Independence of Lithuania is a strict justice.

A. V.

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Poland's propagandists still dream  
of the Niemen. The way to the Baltic  
Sea.



### FREE ?

**L**ITHUANIA was officially declared "independent." But this "independence" from out of Berlin's blood drinker will not make us happy. This "independence" is a new link in the suffering that has chained Lithuania since the beginning of the world war.

Under this "independence" secretly lies all of Lithuania's annexing to Germany. Lithuanians, as the kaiser says, will carry Germany's war burdens, in plain words—Lithuania will have to give her sons to Berlin's bloodthirsty officers to bleed for German junkerism, this measure is compelling, so as to help them lay waste foreign lands; rob and plunder foreign people who want liberty, those who do not want to be junker slaves those who want to protect their families.

We believe that Lithuania never will take onto herself this "independence." It is far better to lose in a one-sided fight than to accept it. Lithuanians

have always fought for liberty, they know its worth and to-day to fight for autoeracy would mean that our forebearers have fought in vain. No, the Lithuanians will not submit.

A monstrous setting—everyone will start new aggressions, new offerings, and the stand against the despot cannot be side step. And Lithuania's tyrants taking in mere "tools" wash their hands as if not to be accounted for the crucifixion of Lithuania. The kaiser's proclamation opens:

"We, Wilhelm, by God's grace German Emperor King of Prussia, etc., hereby make known that whereas the Lithuanian Landsrat as the recognized representative of the Lithuanian people, on December 12, announced the restoration of Lithuania as an independent state allied to the German Empire by an eternal, steadfast alliance, and by conventions chiefly regarding military matters, traffic customs and coinage and solicited the help of the German Empire, and

"Whereas further previous political connections

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in Lithuania are dissolved we command our Imperial chancellor to declare Lithuania on the basis of the aforementioned declarations of the Lithuanian Landsrat in the name of the German Empire as a free and independent state, and we are prepared to accord the Lithuanian state the solicited help and assistance in its restoration.

"We assume the conventions to be concluded will take the interests of the German Empire to account equally with those of Lithuania and that Lithuania will participate in the war burdens of Germany, which secured her liberation."

Lithuania is one of the former Russian border states which the Germans have attempted to set up as nominally independent countries, under German influence. Germany is making every effort to exploit the states economically, but has not attempted to force the former Russian subjects to fight with the German army, as the emperor's announcement indicates may now be done in Lithuania.

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Berlin newspapers reported recently that strong opposition was developing among the Lithuanians to transforming their country into a German "Semi-Federal" state. Entire independence is demanded. The Lithuanians number about 3,000,000, and are found mainly in the former Russian governments of Kovno, Vilna, Grodno and Suwalki.

Germany wants three things: money, munitions and men. The first, we have not, as Germany has already stolen it; the second, we cannot have without having the first; the third, we will not join German ranks for further slavery. Lithuanians will not consent.

## KULTUR

WHAT were once the Baltic provinces of Russia, may infer the fate of all of them by that of Lithuania, of which we read in a cablegram: "From official German sources it is learned that the project to form an independent state of Lithuania has been abandoned, and it is now planned to annex this territory to Prussia." The kaiser, in a telegram congratulating von Hindenburg the "glorious conclusion" of the war on the Eastern front, remarks that "our Baltic brethren and countrymen are liberated from Russia's yoke and may again feel themselves Germans." In Lithuania there are less than two percent Germans.

Ambitions of Atilla.

## LITTLE HISTORY

THE attitude which some of the Lithuanian newspapers have assumed, by their silence, against "The Lithuanian Booster" is ludicrous. There is nothing in these newspapers which gives them the right to such high tone. The worth of a piece of news or prose lies in the prose itself, and not in anything that a prejudiced critic can say or imply by his silence. The readers of "The Lithuanian Booster" are all Boosters capable of judging a work themselves. So that they will not be influenced by these critics who remain silent, when they should speak out, or hoodwinked by those who endeavor to throw sand in their eyes. "The Lithuanian Booster" will pit itself against any other Lithuanian newspaper or magazine for its good purpose and Lithuanian movement, both in the numbers already published and those to come, and its absolute fearlessness in speaking out the truth, exposing all manner of shams, snares, and placing the

Lithuanian movement above the mere plane of a money besotted world of commercialism. The readers of "The Lithuanian Booster" know that the ultimate object of "The Lithuanian Booster" is not to wheedle the coin out of their pockets by eternally catering to their dreams, making life what it is not,—all sunbeams,—and building up false ideals which, sooner or later, the experience of every Lithuanian man or woman will tell them are shattered before they become Real. First and last, "The Lithuanian Booster" will be true to its readers and to its purpose—Free and Independent Lithuania and the Lithuanian movement supported by the will of the Lithuanian people.

Just sixteen years ago when your editor took a stand that there are Lithuanians in this world and that a few centuries ago Lithuania had been erased from the map of Europe by the "pan" Pole, the greedy German, the rough Russian and the remainder of the world paid no attention. Since that time he has written for magazines and newspapers and spoke from

the public platform informing the wide world that there are such a people and it is no wonder that his untiring work on the Lithuanian field has marked him a pioneer. He was the first American to lay the Lithuanian cause in America. He was the first to write articles on Lithuanian history in America and whole world in the English language. He was first to carry the message of Lithuania to over one million students in two years. He was first to establish a publication devoted exclusively to the Lithuanian cause that has enjoyed uninterrupted issuance from the beginning. Besides he has printed other literature and has made the Lithuanian cause echo from coast to coast and from the North Pole to the South American countries, and is being heard in the Old World. If you like "The Lithuanian Booster" show your loyalty in a practical way. Won't you be more liberal with your own magazine, after it is read? Won't you please give or loan your magazine to a friend, (who is not a subscriber,) after you are thru reading it? And

next month, to a different friend, etc. Now is the time.



Chaplain George F. Jonaitis, is the first Lithuanian priest to join Uncle Sam's fighting forces fighting for democracy. Rev. Jonaitis leaves a prosperous parish in Omaha.

## PICTURE

**T**HE picture in this issue was taken especially for THE LITHUANIAN BOOSTER, and looks just like the editor and publisher in his everyday clothes. His mother don't like it because his hair isn't combed back; grandma says it is not pretty enough. Uncle Anthony thinks it's "bum;" Aunt Mary pronounces it "rowdy;" grandpa says it looks like he looked in the Russo-Turkish war, and father says it's all right. A man can't please everybody when he has a picture taken. This picture was made for publication, not for comment. If you don't like it, say nothing.

**J**UST The truth, for that's enough;  
**J**OIN The Boosters—that's the stuff.

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## LECTURES

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**HISTORIC LITHUANIA.**

**THE LITHUANIAN QUESTION.**

These talks are designed for churches, lodges, literary and historical societies, and trade and commercial bodies. They are an attempt to make people think to some purpose about the Lithuanian.

For dates and terms address,

**Thomas Shamis,  
27 Short Street,  
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**THOMAS SHAMIS**

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**with a pur-**  
**pose.**